

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 310719Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9794
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 3655

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: LA, RO
SUBJ: CEAUSESCU VISIT TO LAOS

1. SUMMARY. FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT HERE, WE SEE CEAUSESCU'S VISIT TO LAOS AS UNSUCCESSFUL. PUBLIC EVENTS WERE MARKED BY WHAT ROMANIANS MUST REGARD AS SINS OF BOTH COMMISSION AND OMISSION, MOST EGREGIOUS OF WHICH WAS FAILURE TO SIGN ANY KIND OF DOCUMENT ON ANYTHING. WE HAVE IMPRESSION OF
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LAOTIAN BEMUSEMENT AND GENERAL DISORGANIZATION, COUPLED WITH ROMANIAN FRUSTRATION. END SUMMARY.

2. ROMANIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF CEAUSESCU'S MAY 26-28 STATE VISIT TO LAOS WAS MARKEDLY SUBDUED IN TONE AND EXTENT FROM THAT ACCORDED TO HIS PREVIOUS STOPS IN CHINA, NORTH KOREA, OR VIET NAM (BUCHAREST 3537, 3545, AND 3623,

RESPECTIVELY). ALLEGEDLY, THIS WAS FIRST STATE VISIT TO VIENTIANE IN THE TWO OR SO YEARS SINCE VICTORY OF LEFTIST FORCES IN LAOS, AND LACK OF EXPERIENCE SHOWED. THERE WERE, FOR EXAMPLE, EVIDENTLY NO WELL ORGANIZED TEEMING MASSES AT AIRPORT OR IN STREETS TO RECEIVE HIM OR TO BID HIM FAREWELL, THE MANDATORY ARTISTIC GALA SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN EXCRUCIATINGLY DULL AND RECEIVED ONLY PERFUNCTORY COVERAGE, AND THE RITUAL INDUSTRIAL VISIT WAS TO A RATHER MODEST SCALE (430 WORKERS VS. 6000 IN HANOI TEXTILE MILL) PLYWOOD FACTORY.

3. KAYSONE PHOMVIHA B TOAST AT MAY 26 STATE BANQUET (ASSUME FBIS HAS TEXT) ALSO SHOWED A REMARKABLE LACK OF SENSITIVITY TO ROMANIAN CONCERNS. STUDDERED WITH SUCH REFERENCES TO ORTHODOX MARXIST-LENINIST THEOLOGY AS PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM AND DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT, TERMS WHICH ROMANIANS GENERALLY AVOID WHEN POSSIBLE, SPEAKER WENT ON TO PRAISE SOVIET HELP FOR ROMANIAN "LIBERATION" IN 1944. MOST REMARKABLY, HE NOTED THAT ROMANIA HAS NOW ACHIEVED STATUS AS A "DEVELOPED SOCIALIST COUNTRY", A CATEGORIZATION HE FLATLY REJECTS IN ITS EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ECONOMIC CONCESSIONS FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ON FAVORABLE TERMS AND TO FOSTER IMAGE AS A BROTHER LDC WITH THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES WHICH IT IS WOOLING AVIDLY. FINALLY, PASSAGE DEVOTED TO VIET NAM/ CONFIDENTIAL

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CAMBODIA BORDER CLASHES WAS OBVIOUSLY SO OFFENSIVE TO ROMANIAN SENSIBILITIES THAT IT WAS SEVERELY EDITED BY

MEDIA HERE, RESULT BEING A SHORT AND BLAND SUMMARY WHICH HAD KAYSONE SIMPLY CALLING FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. THIS IS ONLY TIME ON ASIAN TRIP WHERE A PROMINENT SPEAKER'S REMARKS HAVE BEEN RED-PENCILED BY ROMANIAN EDITORS.

4. EVEN MORE REMARKABLY, GIVEN ROMANIAN PENCHANT FOR SIGNING DOCUMENTS, THERE WAS NO JOINT DECLARATION, NO FINAL COMMUNIQUE, AND NO AGREEMENTS, IN CONTRAST TO JOINT DECLARATION OF SEPT. 1976 AFTER KAYSONE VISIT TO BUCHAREST (76 BUCHAREST 5749). ATMOSPHERE OF BILATERAL TALKS WAS CHARACTERIZED AS "WARM COMRADELY FRIENDSHIP AND MUTUAL RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING", A CHARACTERIZATION WHICH IN COMMUNIST LEXICON TENDS TO SIGNIFY DISAGREEMENT.

5. COMMENT. WITH APPROPRIATE CAVEATS FOR THE DISTANCE INVOLVED, WE HAVE DISTINCT IMPRESSION OF LAOTIAN BEMUSEMENT AND DISORGANIZATION, I.E. THEY HAD NO REAL IDEA OF WHO CEAUSESCU IS, WHAT HE REPRESENTS, WHAT HE WAS DOING IN THEIR COUNTRY, OR HOW TO TREAT HIM. NOR

DO ROMANIANS SEEM OVERJOYED WITH RESULTS OF VISIT.
AGGREY

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